UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

CASE NO. 1:14-CR-239

Plaintiff,

v.

OPINION & ORDER [Resolving Doc. 33]

DEION THOMPSON,

•

Defendant.

:

JAMES S. GWIN, UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE:

On March 4, 2016, Deion Thompson requested the appointment of counsel for assistance with filing a habeas motion under Title 28 United States Code Section 2255 in light of the Supreme Court's June 2015 decision in *Johnson v. United States*. This Court has reviewed the merits of Thompson's potential *Johnson* claim and **DENIES** the motion for appointment of counsel.

I. Discussion

The appointment of counsel in a civil proceeding is not a constitutional right and is justified only by exceptional circumstances.²

Thompson would only have a potentially viable *Johnson* claim if his base offense level was increased because of a prior conviction that was a crime of violence only under the residual clause.

In calculating Deion Thompson's base offense level, the pre-sentence report listed two "felony convictions of either a crime of violence or a controlled substance offense . . . to wit: Failure to Comply with Order or Signal of a Police Officer in Cuyahoga County Common Pleas

¹ *Johnson v. United States*, 135 S. Ct. 2551 (2015) (holding that imposing an increased sentence under the residual clause of the Armed Career Criminal Act (ACCA) violates the Constitution's guarantee of due process).

² Lavado v. Keohane, 992 F.2d 601, 606 (6th Cir. 1993).

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Court in Case # CR-05-461329; and . . . Trafficking in Drugs in Cuyahoga County Common

Pleas Court in Case # CR-08-516320."³

The controlled substance offense, Trafficking in Drugs, is not affected by the *Johnson*

decision because it was not classified as a crime of violence. Further, a closer examination of

Thompson's PSR reveals that he was sentenced for another controlled substance offense: Drug

Possession (F-2) in Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court in Case # CR-05-461329. Thus,

regardless of whether or not the Failure to Comply with Order or Signal of Police Officer is no

longer a crime of violence post-*Johnson*, Thompson's guidelines calculation would not be

affected because the pre-sentence report still lists two felony convictions for a controlled

substance offense.

Thompson has not shown that he has a meritorious *Johnson* claim. He cannot

demonstrate that his civil §2255 proceeding is an exceptional circumstance warranting

appointment of counsel.

II. Conclusion

For the reasons above, this Court **DENIES** Defendant's motion seeking the appointment

of counsel.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: March 23, 2016

James S. Gwin

JAMES S. GWIN

UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

³ Presentence Investigation Report at ¶24.

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